

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 SIG-03 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 INRE-00 SS-15 SP-02 SSO-00 NSCE-00
PM-05 DODE-00 PA-01 MCT-01 /080 R

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAKAR IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DACCA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 108913

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PARM, ASEC, AF

SUBJECT: AFGHAN COUP

REF: (A) KABUL 3259 (B) DAKAR 3168 (C) COLOMBO 1993

1. FOLLOWING IS PROVIDED FOR YOUR BACKGROUND INFORMATION.
PARAS. 2 THROUGH 5 MAY BE USED WITH HOST GOVERNMENT OFFI-
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CIALS IF QUERIED ABOUT SITUATION.

2. INFORMATION ABOUT THE COUP UNDER WAY IN AFGHANISTAN
IS STILL MURKY:

-- ON APRIL 27, MILITARY ACTION WAS INITIATED, APPARENTLY
LED BY ARMY TANK UNITS, ABOUT NOON, LOCAL TIME. BY 3 P.M.

AIR FORCE UNITS HAD JOINED THE FRAY, STRAFING THE AIRPORT AND THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE. BY EVENING, THE REBELS HAD CAPTURED RADIO KABUL, THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, THE POST OFFICE, AND HAD BESIEGED THE PALACE.

-- REBEL FORCES APPEARED TO BE LARGELY IN CONTROL OF KABUL AS OF TODAY. HOWEVER, OUR EMBASSY REPORTS THAT SOME FIGHTING CONTINUES IN KABUL, EVIDENCE THAT SOME RESISTANCE IS BEING MET. NO WORD FROM OUTLYING AREAS AS TO EXTENT OF REBEL SUPPORT OR RESISTANCE.

-- IT REMAINS UNCLEAR WHO IS LEADING THE COUP. COL. ABDUL QADER, WHOM THE EMBASSY IDENTIFIES AS CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE AIR FORCE, HAS CLAIMED ON RADIO KABUL TO BE THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY MILITARY COUNCIL.

-- THE REBEL-CONTROLLED RADIO HAS ANNOUNCED THAT DAOUD, AND HIS BROTHER NAIM HAVE BEEN KILLED. OTHER REPORTS THAT HE IS STILL ALIVE, PERHAPS INSIDE THE FRENCH EMBASSY COMPOUND (WHICH IS NEXT TO THE PALACE AND WHICH SUFFERED A TANK ATTACK THAT DESTROYED THE CONSULAR BUILDING).

3. REBEL POLICIES. THE ATTITUDES AND POLICIES THE REBELS WILL ADOPT IF THEY CAN FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT ARE UNCLEAR. IN A KABUL RADIO STATEMENT, THEY ANNOUNCED A FOREIGN POLICY OF RESPECT FOR ISLAM, "DEMOCRATIC INDEPENDENT AND CONFIDENTIAL

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PENDENCE," "PROGRESSIVE" DEVELOPMENT, "POSITIVE" NONALIGNMENT, FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES, AND RESPECT FOR THE UN.

4. REACTIONS. THUS FAR THE ONLY PUBLIC COMMENT FROM ANY OF AFGHANISTAN'S NEIGHBORS HAVE BEEN SOVIET RADIO BROADCASTS ANNOUNCING THE SUCCESS OF THE COUP.

5. SAFETY. THE COUP HAS NOT TAKEN AN ANTI-FOREIGN TURN AND THE REBEL FORCES ANNOUNCED THAT THEY ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL FOREIGNERS IN AFGHANISTAN. ALL AMERICANS IN KABUL APPEAR TO BE SAFE. IT DOES NOT NOW APPEAR THAT AN EVACUATION WILL BE NECESSARY. THE AIRPORT IS CLOSED, AS ARE ALL LAND BORDERS. WE HAVE PUT OUT A TRAVEL ADVISORY STRONGLY RECOMMENDING AGAINST TRAVEL TO AFGHANISTAN OF OFFICIAL BY PRIVATE CITIZENS.

6. BACKGROUND. THE COUP SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN TRIGGERED BY THE APRIL 26 ARREST OF LEADING MEMBERS OF THE KHALQ (MASSES) PARTY. THIS PRO-SOVIET, COMMUNIST PARTY BROUGHT OUT SOME 15,000 PERSONS (FIVE TIMES ITS KNOWN MEMBERSHIP) DURING THE FUNERAL ON APRIL 19 OF ITS ASSASSINATED CHIEF

IDEOLOGUE. HOWEVER, WE KNOW LITTLE SO FAR ABOUT THE MOTIVATION OR NATURE OF THE REBEL LEADERS. FRAGMENTARY EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT THEY MAY BE LEFTIST AND/OR STRONGLY ISLAMIC NATIONALISTS.

7. EMBASSIES ISLAMABAD AND TEHRAN HAVE BEEN SHARING INFORMATION WITH IRANIAN AND PAKISTANI OFFICIALS. THE IRANIANS APPEAR TO BE RESIGNED TO A REBEL VICTORY AND IT SEEMS THAT IRANIAN INTERVENTION ON BEHALF OF THE DAUD REGIME IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY. AMBASSADOR HUMMEL POINTS OUT THAT PAKS ARE ABLE TO MEDDLE IN AFGHANISTAN BUT WILL

PROBABLY ACT CAUTIOUSLY PARTICULARLY IF THE SHAH COUNSELS MODERATION.

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8. FOR SEOUL. KOREAN EMBASSY KABUL REQUESTED THAT WE INFORM FONMIN SEOUL OF KABUL SITUATION. ROK CHANCERY SUSTAINED SOME DAMAGE FROM SHRAPNEL AND STRAY ROUNDS DURING THE FIGHTING, BUT DAMAGE NOT REPEAT NOT SEVERE. ALL ROK STAFF IS SAFE AND NOT REPEAT NOT INJURED.

9. FOR DAKAR. YOU MAY PASS INFO IN PARAS. 2-5 TO AFGHAN DELEGATION.

10. FOR COLOMBO. SAME INFO MAY BE PASSED TO FONMIN. THERE IS NO WORD ABOUT STATUS OF NAM MEETING AS YET. VANCE

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 28 apr 1978
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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